

# SUSTAINABLE OFFICE TIPS

Your guide to greening your office

**Reduce, reuse and recycle - this is the simple mantra you need to keep in mind to make sure your office operates with the minimal possible impact on the environment. Many Heart of the City members don't own their own building so here are some ways you can green your office no matter whether it's owned, shared or rented.**

## STEP ONE: ENGAGE YOUR COLLEAGUES

You might be surprised which of your colleagues has a passion for environmental changes. Try setting up a suggestion box, a lunch meet-up or a sending out a survey to help you find out who's interested and what they care about.

Bring those people together into a group to take action and recruit a champion from each department. If you're in a shared building, you could set up a building-wide group with a rep from each business - and don't forget to include your property manager.

What's the issue that you and your colleagues want to address? Does the lack of recycling drive you mad? Have you got ideas on how to reduce energy consumption?

Identify who you need on board to implement environmental change initiatives: a facilities manager, the landlord or cleaners?

Just moved in? Introduce yourself to other businesses in the building and find out what initiatives they have in place - they might have some great ideas you could adopt!

Don't forget to add sustainability to the agenda of your regular tenant meetings. This way environmental initiatives get reviewed regularly and you can share best practice.

## STEP TWO: REDUCE WASTE

Waste comes in lots of forms - paper, office supplies, furniture and more. Some ideas to help reduce your overall impact on the environment:

- **Put an end to unwanted mail.** If your post goes straight in the bin invest a little time in sending back unwanted mail and removing your company name from mailing lists. To avoid unsolicited mail register with the [Mailing Preference Service](#).
- **Reusables over disposables.** When ordering office supplies investigate whether you could opt for less packaging or long-lasting items. For example, choose crockery and cutlery over their single-use alternatives.
- **Waste not, want not.** Have you got office furniture or equipment you no longer use? [Waste Match](#) is one of many platforms that redistribute these items to charities that need it. Lots of organisations safely wipe IT equipment and donate to schools and charities: [RecycleIT](#), [Camara](#), [Computers for Charities](#) and [WeeeCharity](#).



Every business can be a force for good  
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- **Take action on food waste.** We throw away £12.5 billion worth of good food every year in the UK. If you provide lunch for client meetings or catering for events, avoid over-ordering. If you do end up with leftovers you can stop it going to waste by signing up to [FoodCycle](#) or [Olio](#): they collect leftover food and redistribute to charities and the community.
- **Think before you print.** A lot of office waste is made up of paper. Setting the default on printers to double-sided printing reduces consumption and potential waste by 50%. If you can print in black and white only, you'll save money too!
- **Paper free meetings.** If your business uses laptops can you challenge your teams to have paper-free meetings? You can be just as effective in meetings without unnecessarily printing information.
- **Recycle the right way.** Does everything in your office get thrown away together? This takes up more space and costs more to dispose of. Speak to your waste management provider about clearly labelling bins so people know how to separate general and recyclable waste. Location is key - get rid of individual desk bins and make central recycling points. Let employees know they should always rinse out food packaging and drinks bottles before recycling.
- **Stop sending anything to the landfill.** There's a major need to stop sending our waste to landfill sites. Check that your waste management provider offers a guarantee that none of the waste collected goes to a landfill.

## STEP THREE: SAVE ENERGY

- **Find your baseline.** The first step to energy saving is to determine how much energy your office is using and what you're paying for it. You'll need 12 months of utility bills or meter readings for your building or office space. Carbon Trust has a handy [benchmark tool](#) for small companies' buildings.
- **Switch it off.** If it doesn't need to be on, switch it off! This goes for lights, electric appliances and computer equipment. When leaving for the day remember to turn computers off rather than leaving them on standby. Could you install motion sensors or LED lights? They consume less energy than traditional lightbulbs.

### ABOVE ALL...THINK POSITIVE!

Taking an encouraging, fun approach to greening your office can make all the difference. Don't make your team feel as though they're being told off, encourage and help them to do the right thing. One of our members helped popularise their switch-off campaign by rewarding team members who turned off their computers overnight with a chocolate on their desks in the morning!

